

Notes and Observations

FAITHFUL IN DEATH: On September 9th while walking round the local woods I saw a speckled wood butterfly (*Pararge aegeria* L.) in flight, which appeared to have a peculiar appendage attached to its abdomen. After some difficulty, I caught the butterfly and found that it was a female and the appendage was the body, part of the thorax, and one wing of a male, with its claspers still firmly gripping the female. I gently eased the two abdomens apart and the lady flew away apparently none the worse.

The mated couple must have been attacked by a bird, but it seems curious that the attacker made such a poor job of it.—**MAJOR GENERAL C. G. LIPSCOMB**, Crockerton House, nr. Warminster, Wilts. 17.x.1971.

ABUNDANCE OF POLYGONIA C-ALBUM L.—I have never regarded the comma butterfly, *Polygonia c-album*, as a particularly common insect but on October 5th, during an hour's walk in local woodlands, I counted no less than 34 specimens feeding on over-ripe blackberries in the rides, and this in an area where in previous autumns the normal sighting has been two or three in a day.—**MAJOR GENERAL C. G. LIPSCOMB**, Crockerton House, nr. Warminster, Wilts. 17.x.1971.

A NEW FOOD PLANT FOR THE PRIVET HAWK MOTH LARVA?—In late August of this year I discovered a larva of the privet hawk moth, *Sphinx ligustri* L. feeding on a scabious plant growing in my garden. It had obviously been there all its life, as there were droppings of all sizes beneath the plant. A further search of the other scabious plants revealed three more larvae, all about full fed. I have found the species on privet, lilac, ash and holly, but to me, scabious is a new food plant for the species. — **R. C. REVELS**, Top Field Farm, Dunton Lane, Biggleswade, Beds. 28.x.1971.

THE HOLLY BLUE IN LONDON: Confirming reports of the abundance of the second brood of this species this year I would like to report that on July 30th I saw a number of holly blue (*Celastrina argiolus* L.) butterflies in the Chelsea Physic Garden in London. There appears to be a flourishing colony there.—**C. A. CLARKE**, The Dept. of Medicine, University of Liverpool, Ashton Street, Liverpool L69 38X. 1.xi.1971.

RHYACIA SIMULANS HUFN. AT WOKING, SURREY. — On the morning of the 26th August, 1971, there was a specimen of *Rhyacia simulans* Hufn., the dotted rustic, in my M.V. trap in the garden here. This seems to be an unusual visitor to the area; the moth is in reasonably fresh condition, but the colouring is not quite the same as specimens from the Cotswolds.—**J. A. C. GREENWOOD**, The Thatches, Pyrford, Woking, Surrey. 3.x.1971.